



## South Carolina Department of Agriculture Hugh Weathers, Commissioner

**Ask for South Carolina. Nothing's Fresher. Nothing's Finer.**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **SC Department of Agriculture Partners with Wal-Mart to Promote Locally Grown Produce** *SCDA and Wal-Mart Launch Statewide Campaign Encouraging Consumers to Buy Certified SC Grown*

**Columbia, SC – June 24, 2008** – Today the South Carolina Department of Agriculture (SCDA) and Wal-Mart announced they will partner to promote locally grown produce at Wal-Mart stores across South Carolina. The announcement was made at kick-off events held at the Lexington, Greenville, and North Charleston Wal-Marts. Standing atop crates of fresh, SC produce, Hugh Weathers, Commissioner of Agriculture, thanked Wal-Mart for the company's support and explained to customers the benefits of buying local.

"We are fortunate to have an abundance of agricultural resources here in South Carolina, especially our produce farms," said Weathers. "We are also fortunate that a leading retailer like Wal-Mart recognizes the importance of providing locally grown produce to consumers," he added. "Buying locally grown is the basis of sustainability. Not only does it keep a little of the grocery money close to where we live, supporting the family farm and the community's economy, but it also helps save on the cost of energy because locally grown travels less distance."

Wal-Mart stores will display Certified SC Grown signage in all of their SC stores making it easy for buyers to identify locally grown produce and products. "We work hard every day to save our customers money – when fruits and vegetables travel less distance, saving energy and providing fresh produce right from SC farmers – it's a win for all involved," said Patsy Williams, Market Manager for Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. in the Midlands of SC. "Wal-Mart really embraced this program last year and we continue to hear from our customers how much they appreciate the opportunity to buy local," Williams added.

Midlands farmer Ashley Rawl of W.P. Rawl & Sons, Inc. also spoke at the event, explaining how his family's farm has supplied fresh vegetables to Wal-Mart for over ten years.

"We are proud to be a partner with Wal-Mart, and we are very glad that they are working with Commissioner Weathers to raise awareness of local farmers by supporting the SC Certified Grown campaign," said Rawl.

In 2008, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. spent over \$662 million for merchandise and services with 810 suppliers in South Carolina sourcing millions in peaches, cantaloupes, bell peppers, squash, corn, tomatoes, and watermelon from South Carolina farmers to supply stores across the United States.

This promotional campaign is an extension of the SCDA's Certified South Carolina program, an exciting cooperative effort among producers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and the SCDA, to brand and promote SC produce and products. The program is based on the idea that when presented with the option, South Carolinians will buy local because- Nothing's Fresher, Nothing's Finer than South Carolina products and produce.

Additional information about the SCDA and its branding programs, including a Certified SC Grown directory, may be found online at [www.agriculture.sc.gov](http://www.agriculture.sc.gov) and [www.certifiedscgrown.com](http://www.certifiedscgrown.com).

**About Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT)**

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT) and its foundation are proud to support the charitable causes that are important to customers and associates in their own neighborhoods. Through its philanthropic programs and partnerships, the company supports initiatives focused on enhancing opportunities in education, job skills training, sustainability, and health and human services. In 2007, Wal-Mart, Sam's Club and the Wal-Mart Foundation gave \$296 million to communities across the United States. To learn more, visit [www.walmartstores.com/community](http://www.walmartstores.com/community).

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